

## **REMARKS**

An Office Action was mailed June 18, 2009. This response is timely. Any fee due with this paper, including any necessary extension fees, may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

### **Summary**

Claims 27-54 are pending at the time of examination. Claims 27 and 43 are the independent claims.

By the foregoing, claims 27 and 43 are amended, claims 38-40 are cancelled. No new matter has been added. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

### **Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)**

Claims 27-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,125,478 to Alaloof in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,298,487 to Mayhew. Alaloof is cited for teaching all limitations except the front opening being offset. Mayhew is cited to fill the gap. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Alaloof and Mayhew (emphasis Mayhew) do not teach, disclose, or suggest the presently claimed invention. The presently claimed invention of independent claims 27 and includes a jacket comprising *“a front opening offset from a centerline of the jacket, the front opening comprising a curved line and being offset towards a sleeve.”* Specifically, the presently claimed invention includes an inflatable garment having an offset curved opening 15 on a front side, as noted in Figs. 2, 4, and 5, reproduced below.

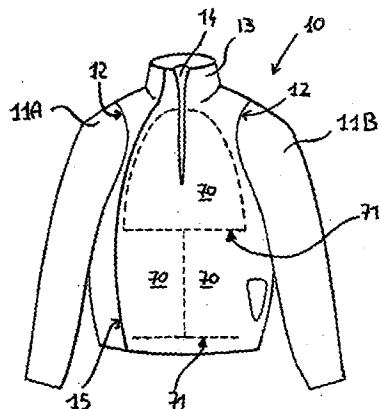


Fig. 2

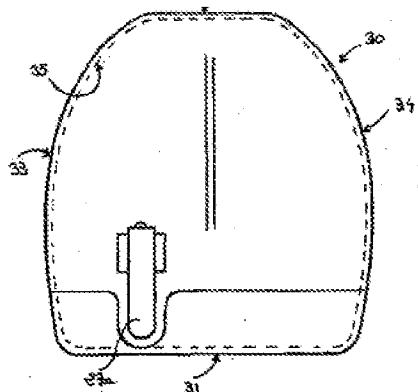


Fig. 4

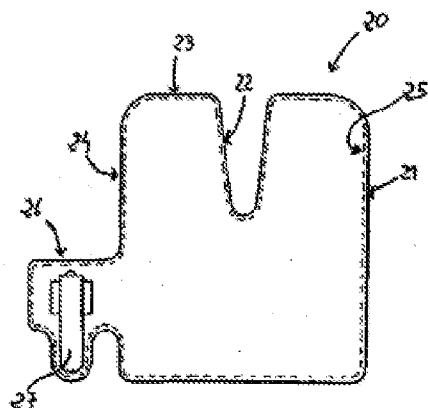
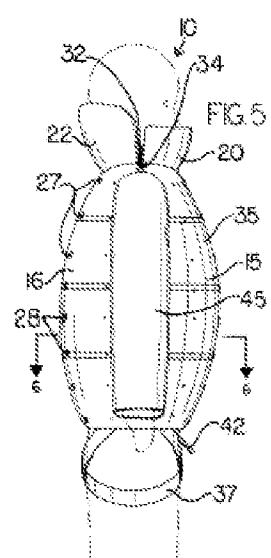
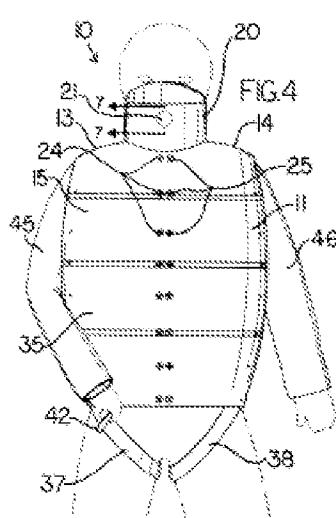
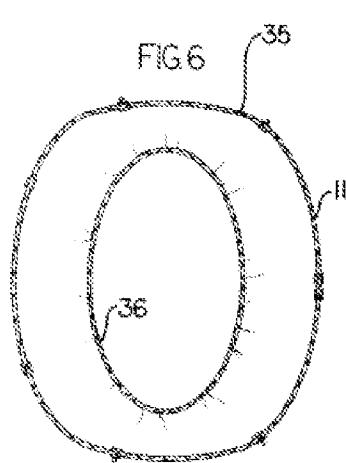


Fig. 5

In contrast, Aloof and Mayhew (emphasis Mayhew), as noted in Fig. 6, teach fasteners 25 that permit a proper arrangement of the pleated portions when the jacket is in deflated status but they do not allow opening and closing of the jacket. The cited art teaches an external layer 35 and an internal layer 36 of the garment that fail to have openings at the front and at the rear.



Specifically, Aloof and Mayhew (emphasis Mayhew) teaches zippers 34 are extend along splits 32, 33 for opening and closing of jacket parts 11. However, as noted in Figs. 4 and 5, these splits are positioned on shoulder portions 13, 14 (Mayhew 5:3-8) and not, as in the presently claimed invention, along the front side. Indeed, as illustrated in Fig. 5, zippers 34 are completely straight since they are assembled into the garment along the two straight seams that meet on the shoulder.

In contrast, in the presently claimed invention as seen in Fig. 2, front opening 15 comprises a curved line that is advantageously ergonomic unlike a straight line and consequently is more comfortable for a user. The curved front opening requires that the fabric from which it is made is into a curved path in order to accept the closure device.

In fact, when the presently claimed garment is worn, the zipper follows the natural curve over the chest and abdomen of the wearer. Advantageously, the zipper then could be disposed in two planes, rather than just one as in the cited reference.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection.

All dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claim from which they depend.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for examination and ready passage to allowance, which is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for examination or allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper, including any necessary extension fees, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

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